

EDITORIAL

LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a very controversial subject, particularly in a professional society such as ours. Physiotherapists tend to be "doers", instructing patients what to do, how to do it and even when to do it. The tendency is thus to put on a "bold front" and develop or display a fairly strong, commanding personality. To choose leaders from such a group, and then expect the group to follow such leaders, is more difficult than appears at first sight.

Why do we need leaders? Marion J. Leslie in the Enid Graham Memorial Lecture (1982) asks why the Canadian Physiotherapy Association wished to develop leaders and what they wished these leaders to do. Would they help physiotherapists achieve greater scientific credibility? Would they help physiotherapists gain greater authority, recognition and financial rewards? Would they help physiotherapists attain greater professional status in order to practice physiotherapy with greater independence? If development of leaders is accepted as a guiding principle, it must imply a lack of leadership.

Marion Leslie then examines the concept of leadership. It has fascinated scholars and laymen alike. We understand history by studying great political, religious, military and social leaders. How do they inspire dedication and devotion? How do they build empires, be they nationalities or multinational corporations? How do they rise to fame or why are they toppled, despite their accomplishments?

Scientific research into the concept of leadership has resulted in a plethora of articles, books, pamphlets and speeches this century. There seems to be a great variety of definitions of leadership both confusing and contradictory. Some refer to desirable traits of character and personality, others to behaviour.

Marion Leslie finally examines leadership in terms of a four fold typology, as described by Arthur Jago. Professor of management studies at the University of Houston. He defines it thus:

Leadership is both a *process* and a *property*. The *process* of leadership is the use of non-coercive influence to direct and co-ordinate the activities of the members of an organized group toward the accomplishment of group objectives. As a *property*, leadership is the set of qualities or characteristics attributed to those who are perceived to successfully employ such influence.

Jago identifies two theoretical approaches: the *universal theorists* who consider leadership a specific phenomenon, not varying from situation to situation (Type I and II) and the *contingent theorists* who hold that leadership depends on certain situations involving variables such as the task, the followers, the environment etc (Type III & IV).

Type I - universal leadership traits. The Great Man theories defined leadership in terms of fundamental traits such as physical and constitutional factors; skill and ability;

personality and social characteristics. Yet there are many exceptions who do not conform to these theories.

Type II - universal leadership styles. Theorists examined behaviour properties such as consideration, initiating structure, autocracy and democracy to distinguish effective leaders. These theories consider leadership training (sensitivity training, role-play and self-assessment) rather than selection of leaders. Yet, there is little evidence that change in attitude due to training is sustained or has a marked effect. Both Type I and Type II theories are simplistic, but don't seem to hold water!

Type III - contingency leadership traits. This theory evolved from the problems with Type I & II theories. However, recognizing increasing personality traits and situational variables becomes very complex and again no hard evidence of its usefulness has emerged.

Type IV - contingency leadership styles. This seems to be the present state of the art. Effective leadership would thus be the ability to identify the ways in which people are motivated and stimulated, how they respond in various situations and then to respond appropriately!

From this analysis it is still difficult to define leadership, which probably represents a cluster of variables. Zaleznik, a social psychologist from Harvard Business School, contrasts managers and leaders in terms of attitudes towards goals, conceptions of work, relations with others and sense of self. In summary a leader is active rather than reactive; he creates new goals rather than reaching established ones; he explores new avenues, opens up novel options, creates disorder, changes the way people think, excites the imagination and seeks out risks; he relates to people intuitively and empathically, whilst having a sense of separateness and isolation from people and institutions. Yet in a technological, economically successful society, the need for leaders is apparently downgraded!

Marion Leslie concludes that this may be the answer — that the profession needs people who will get up front, open new avenues, take risks, and shoot from the hip! But she also asks the question whether the opportunities for leadership are being provided. Despite the tremendous technological advances of the past decade, very little real new technology has been added to the physiotherapist's repertoire. It would seem that we need to *design* our own future, rather than *plan* it in this era of change. We need to support the science of physiotherapy with research, but the art of a healing, helping, caring profession should not be neglected.

Have you elected your leaders? Are you creating opportunity for them to practice leadership? And are you prepared to follow them with dedication and devotion?

References

Leslie, M. J. (1982). The Enid Graham Memorial Lecture. *Physiother. Canad* 34, 249-254.

Contents - Inhoud

Concepts in Early Sensory Development — S. F. Blacha	4	The Role of the Quadriceps Muscle in Knee Extension — E. S. Janks	13
Exercise in the Rehabilitation of CHD patients — T. Noakes	7	World Confederation for Physical Therapy	15
SASP National Congress Registration forms	i	Book Reviews	16
		Classified	17